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QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES, INCLUDING PALESTINE

Letter dated 15 March 2001 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

In follow-up to my previous letters concerning the continued deterioration of the situation of human rights as well as the persistence of the Israeli criminal war against the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, please find herewith enclosed an urgent appeal issued by H.E. Dr. Riyad Za'noun, Minister of Health in the Palestinian National Authority.

I would be grateful if you could have the enclosed document* distributed as an official document of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on Human Rights under agenda item 8.

(Signed): Nabil RAMLAWI

Ambassador
Permanent Observer

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* Reproduced as received, in English only.

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Annex

Urgent appeal

In the time the Palestinian people in the west Bank and Gaza are suffering from the arbitrary occupation measures, since more than 5 months in the form of collective punishment, including siege and closure of all cities, in addition to shooting and bombarding of the civilians leading to thousands of injuries.

In the last few days, the occupation authority had escalated their restrictive measures against the civilian population, including complete closure of all enteries and exits of all villages isolating them from each other and from the nearest cities.

A flagrant example is that 33 villages located north west to Rammallah including Beirzeit university, had been completely isolated, and consequently 80000 population are not allowed to leave their villages, or to reach Rammallah where all health and educational institutions are located.

Today 11/03/2001 the same restrictive measures were applied to all villages around Jerusalem.

Under such harsh inhuman arbitrary measures, and circumstances the MOH became unable to provide its vital activities, and its routine medical services both curative and preventive measures, particularly the implementation of the vaccination programs and campaigns to our children, which creates serious situation that can lead to the spread of very dangerous epidemics.

Most of the medical teams are not allowed to reach the hospitals and the primary health care institutions, which are almost paralyzed, and cannot provide their services, and meet their commitments towards civilian population.

Even the waste disposal operations, cannot be carried out, leaving piles of garbage in the towns and villages, and this will impose serious danger and consequences to health and environment.

Nevertheless the ambulances are not allowed to transfer the injured peoples and patients to the medical institutions, such a case seriously endanger the life of our people.

All these measures are considered serious violations to the principles of human rights, and all international laws and legitimacy including the famous fourth Geneva Convention, which stresses on the nessicity of maintaining the civilian's health during wars.

On behalf of all our people and deprived children and on behalf of the humanity, we appeal urgently to the united nation, all international society, and peace lovers, all over the world, and in particular to all international human rights agencies, and red cross, crescent institutions, to act immediately and take the necessary intervention, to stop all these none human arbitrary acts against Palestinian people to allow them living in peace with dignity and to enjoy their basic human rights as other nations .

Minster of Health

Dr. Riyad Za'noun

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